



**Health Department**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***First Bird Identified in Wisconsin During 2002 with West Nile Virus***  
***Crow found in Milwaukee County “probable positive” for West Nile Virus***

The Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene in Madison has contacted the City of Milwaukee Health Department after identifying a crow as a “probable positive” for West Nile Virus (WNV). This bird was collected by the Milwaukee Health Department on June 25<sup>th</sup> and then transported to Madison for virus testing. This specimen is now being sent to the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Wildlife Health Center in Madison for confirmatory WNV analysis.

“This is the first bird we have detected in Wisconsin this year that is presumptive positive for West Nile Virus,” said Paul Biedrzycki, Disease Control and Prevention Manager for the City of Milwaukee Health Department. “The Milwaukee Health Department expected to find birds infected with West Nile Virus this year. The department will continue with our surveillance measures including bird, mosquito, and human monitoring as this virus continues to emerge in various regions of the Midwest.”

Last year, a total of 58 birds were found positive with WNV in the state of Wisconsin; 54 of those birds were found in Milwaukee County. Wild birds, especially crows, hawks, ravens and blue jays, are susceptible to WNV. These species become sick and die when infected with the virus. If someone should find a sick or dead crow, blue jay, or raven, please contact the Milwaukee Health Department at 286-3521, your local DNR office, or the West Nile Virus Hotline: 1-800-433-1610 to report it.

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